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DE WITT'S ACTING PLAYS.

(Number 218.)

NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS

A Farce,

IN TWO ACTS.

By CHARLES DANCE, Esq.

As First Performed at the Royal Olympic Theatre, London.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A description of the Costumes—Synopsis of the Piece—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and the whole of the Stage Business.

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No.		M.	F.
75.	Adrienne, drama, 3 acts	7	3
114.	Anything for a Change, comedy, 1	3	3
167.	Apple Blossoms, comedy, 3 acts	7	3
93.	Area Belle (The), farce, 1 act	3	2
40.	Atchi, comedietta, 1 act	3	2
89.	Aunt Charlotte's Maid, farce, 1 act	3	3
192.	Game of Cards (A), comedietta, 1	3	1
166.	Bardell *vs.* Pickwick, sketch, 1 act.	6	2
41.	Beautiful Forever, farce, 1 act	2	3
141.	Bells (The), drama, 3 acts	9	3
67.	Birthplace of Podgers, farce, 1 act	7	3
36.	Black Sheep, drama, 3 acts	7	5
160.	Blow for Blow, drama, 4 acts	11	6
70.	Bonnie Fish Wife, farce, 1 act	3	1
179.	Breach of Promise,, drama, 2 acts	5	2
25.	Broken-Hearted Club, comedietta, 1	4	8
24.	Cabman, No. 93, farce, 1 act	2	2
1.	Caste, comedy, 3 acts	5	3
69.	Caught by the Cuff, farce, 1 act	4	1
175.	Cast upon the World, drama, 5 acts.	10	5
55.	Catharine Howard, historical play, 3 acts	12	5
80.	Charming pair, farce, 1 act	4	3
65.	Checkmate, comedy, 2 acts	6	5
68.	Chevalier de St. George, drama, 3	9	3
76.	Chops of the Channel, farce, 1 act.	3	2
149.	Clouds, comedy, 4 acts	8	7
121.	Comical Countess, farce, 1 act	3	1
107.	Cupboard Love, farce, 1 act	2	1
152.	Cupid's Eye-Glass, comedy, 1 act	1	1
52.	Cup of Tea, comedietta, 1 act	3	1
148.	Cut off with a Shilling, comedietta, 1 act	2	1
113.	Cyrill's Success, comedy, 5 acts	10	4
199.	Captain of the Watch (The), comedietta, 1 act	4	2
20.	Daddy Gray, drama, 3 acts	8	4
4.	Dandelion's Dodges, farce, 1 act	4	2
22.	David Garrick, comedy, 3 acts	8	3
96.	Dearest Mamma, comedietta, 1 act,	4	3
16.	Dearer than Life, drama, 3 acts	6	5
58.	Deborah (Leah) drama, 3 acts	7	6
125.	Deerfoot, farce, 1 act	5	1
71.	Doing for the Best, drama, 2 acts	5	3
142.	Dollars and Cents, comedy, 3 acts	9	4
21.	Dreams, drama, 5 acts	6	3
186.	Duchess de la Valliere, play, 5 acts	6	4
47.	Easy Shaving, farce, 1 act	5	2
13.	Everybody's Friend, comedy, 3 acts.	6	5
200.	Estranged, an operetta, 1 act	2	1
103.	Faust and Marguerite, drama, 3 acts,	9	7
9.	Fearful Tragedy in the Seven Dials, interlude, 1 act	4	1
128.	Female Detective, drama, 3 acts	11	4
101.	Fernande, drama, 3 acts	11	10
99.	Fifth Wheel, comedy, 3 acts	10	2
145.	First Love, comedy, 1 act	4	1
102.	Foiled, drama, 4 acts	9	3
88.	Founded on Facts, farce, 1 act	4	2
74.	Garrick Fever, farce, 1 act	7	4
53.	Gertrude's Money Box, farce, 1 act.	4	2
73.	Golden Fetter (Fettered), drama, 3	11	4
30.	Goose with the Golden Eggs, farce, 1 act	5	3
131.	Go to Putney, farce, 1 act	4	3
28.	Happy Pair, comedietta, 1 act	1	1
151.	Hard Case (A), farce, 1 act	2	
8.	Henry Dunbar, drama, 4 acts	10	3
180.	Henry the Fifth, historical play, 5	38	5
19.	He's a Lunatic, farce, 1 act	3	2
60.	Hidden Hand, drama, 4 acts	5	5
187.	His Own Enemy, farce, 1 act	4	1
174.	Home, comedy, 3 acts	4	3
64.	Household Fairy, sketch, 1 act	1	1
190.	Hunting the Slipper, farce, 1 act	4	1
191.	High C, comedietta, 1 act	4	2
197.	Hunchback (The), play, 5 acts	14	2
18.	If I Had a Thousand a Year, farce, 1 act	4	3
116.	I'm Not Mesilf at All, original Irish stew, 1 act	3	2
129.	In for a Holiday, farce, 1 act	2	3
159.	In the Wrong House, farce, 1 act	4	2
122.	Isabella Orsini, drama, 4 acts	11	4
177.	I Shall Invite the Major, comedy, 1	4	1
100.	Jack Long, drama, 2 acts	9	2
139.	Joy is Dangerous, comedy, 2 acts	3	3
17.	Kind to a Fault, comedy, 2 acts	6	4
86.	Lady of Lyons, play, 5 acts	12	5
72.	Lame Excuse, farce, 1 act	4	2

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No. 15340

NEW YORK:
CLINTON T. DE WITT, PUBLISHER,
(SUCCESSOR TO R. M. DE WITT),
No. 33 Rose Street.

[1877]

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

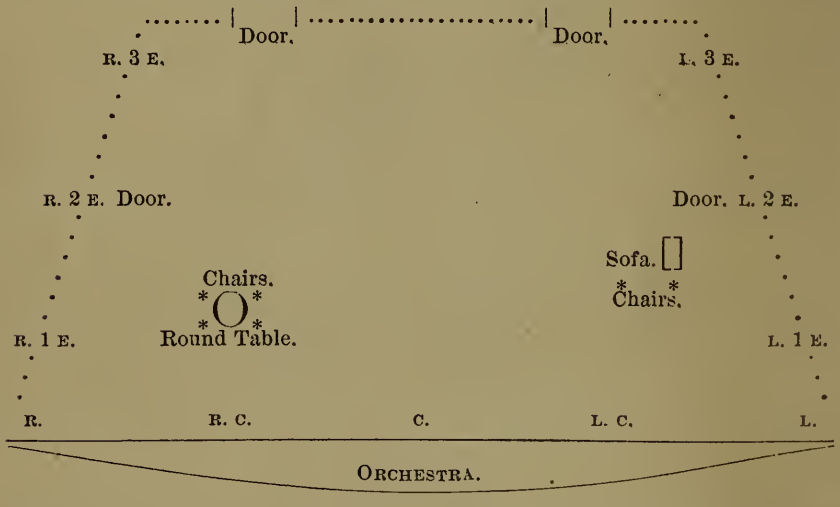
	Royal Olympic, London.	*Park, N. Y.*, 1848.	*Olympic, N. Y.*
Admiral Kingston	Mr. W. Farren	Mr. Gilbert	Mr. Nickinson.
Lieut. Kingston, R. N.	Mr. C. Matthews	Mr. Walcot	Mr. Walcot.
Short	Mr. Wyman	Mr. Hamilton	Mr. Conover.
Dennis	Mr. Brougham		Mr. Everard.
Mrs. Pontifex	Mrs. Orger	Mrs. Gilbert	Mrs. Turner.
Miss Mortimer	Madame Vestris	Miss Rose Telbin	Miss Clark.

TIME IN REPRESENTATION—ONE HOUR AND THIRTY MINUTES.

SCENERY.

ACT I., Scene 1.—A hall at the Fountain Inn, at Portsmouth.

ACT I., Scene 2.—A room in same, with doors F., and doors R. and L. 2 E. Mrs. Col. Pontifex and Lieut. Kingston discovered; the former at work on settee, C.,



small work-table and basket before her; the latter R. C., facing the audience, with his legs across a chair, his hands crossed on the back of it, and his chin resting on his hands. The room is furnished with round table, R., covered with writing materials, books, portfolio of prints, vase of flowers, etc.; sofa, L., and chairs, covered with chintz furniture; the settee and two chairs, on which Mrs. Pontifex and the lieutenant are seated must be set in front of the second grooves, so that the third scene may close up, leaving them on the stage, with the side doors as used in this scene, and painted to match the third.

ACT I., Scene 3.—Another room in same; the admiral's two doors in F., R. and L.

ACT I., Scene 4.—Same as second.

ACT II., Scene 1.—The hall in the Fountain Inn.

ACT II., Scene 2.—Same as Scene third—settee and two chairs.

ACT II., Scene 3.—Same as Scene second, Act first.

COSTUMES.

Admiral Kingston.—Modern naval uniform, epaulettes, a gold stripe of lace down the trousers.

Lieutenant Kingston, R. N.—Modern naval uniform, etc.

Short (landlord of the Fountain, at Portsmouth).—Black coat and trousers, figured cut velvet waistcoat, white neckerchief, pumps.

Dennis (waiter at ditto).—White trousers, buff waistcoat, blue striped jacket; white neckerchief. After the first scene he wears a black narrow and long-tailed coat.

Mrs. Pontifax.—A puce satin pelisse, lace cap and lappets.

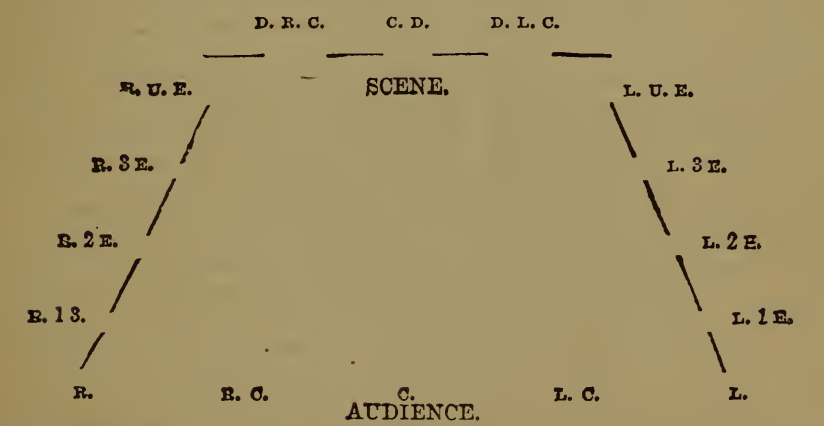
Miss Mortimer.—A white satin pelisse over a blue slip; blue flowers in the hair.

PROPERTIES.

Work-basket and work, writing materials, books, portfolio of prints, vase of flowers, bill of fare.

EXPLANATION OF THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The Actor is supposed to face the Audience.



L.	Left.	C.	Centre.
L. C.	Left Centre.	R.	Right.
L. 1 E.	Left First Entrance.	R. 1 E.	Right First Entrance.
L. 2 E.	Left Second Entrance.	R. 2 E.	Right Second Entrance.
L. 3 E.	Left Third Entrance.	R. 3 E.	Right Third Entrance.
L. U. E.	Left Upper Entrance (wherever this Scene may be.)	R. U. E.	Right Upper Entrance.
D. L. C.	Door Left Centre.	D. R. C.	Door Right Centre.

SYNOPSIS.

DENNIS, a waiter, is discovered asleep in the hall of the Fountain Inn, at Portsmouth, when SHORT, the landlord, enters, grumbling at the high price of marketing. SHORT bawls in DENNIS' ear, and asks if there is anybody with old Admiral KINGSTON, in Room 8. He is told there is a pretty young lady there, likewise that in Room 14 there is a young naval officer and a middle-aged female. After a keen exchange of rough verbal shots they withdraw. In the next scene Lieut. KINGSTON and Mrs. Col. PONTIFEX are conversing. The lieutenant is ill at ease, and the lady questions him sharply. He appears to dread meeting his father, after a long absence, although he admits that they had always been more like brothers than father and son; still they had agreed that if either married the bride should not be of an unsuitable age, and now, insinuated the young officer, I am about to marry Mrs. Col. PONTIFEX. The lady is slightly touched at this reference to her age, but they agree that the best thing they can do is to hurry and meet the old admiral. The landlord is summoned, after the lady withdraws, and, to the youth's surprise, tells him that Admiral KINGSTON is at the very moment in the inn. The lieutenant learns that he is in Room No. 8, and rushes off to meet him, but, looking into his room, finds it empty, and retires. A moment after Miss MORTIMER and the admiral are there together. From their conversation it appears that they are to be married, although the lady is so much the gentleman's junior that she calls him "grandpa." Then it transpires that the admiral is nervous about meeting his son and telling him of his approaching marriage, for the reason already given; but he dares not tell his young intended that. The old gentleman goes off to find his son, while the son returns to look for him. Dashing into the room, he is surprised to find a beautiful young lady there. In vain he tries to find out what her business is in the admiral's rooms; but she craftily and wittily baffles him, and withdraws. Puzzled, he rushes off to look elsewhere for his father. The old gentleman, meanwhile, has crossed into his son's rooms, and is startled at hearing, in a female voice, "Is that you, Kingston dear?" At his wits' end to account for this state of affairs, he essays to get from the lady—whose looks he likes vastly—an explanation, but she shrewdly parries his inquiries, and then leaves him. The son runs in, and the twain indulge in an affectionate hug. After a pleasant interchange of compliments they recall old times, and particularly the fact that they agreed so well with each other that they had resolved never to marry without mutual concurrence. They are both embarrassed, and beat about like boats with a head-wind. At last the admiral plumply announces that he is going to take a wife—a young woman. TOM rejoins that he also is about to be married—to a widow. Each sees at once the absurdity of the other's choice, and they don't spare ridicule. They are about to part in a pet, the father saying, "Boy, go to your widow"—the son responding, "And you, sir, to your boarding-school miss;" but the two ladies enter, and a comical scene ensues, in which all take laughable parts, and are playing at cross purposes.

In the second act DENNIS and SHORT have a genuine bit of drollery, which is cut short by the entrance of Miss MORTIMER and Mrs. PONTIFEX. The ladies agree that each of them shall go to the other's sweetheart, and get them to "let up" on the engagements, as they are only productive of ill-feeling. Mrs. PONTIFEX sees the admiral, and leaves him delighted with her good sense and good looks. MARY meanwhile calls at TOM's room. The latter begins to grow sentimental as he recalls their early days, when they were children together; but MARY reminds him of their altered circumstances, and tells him that they must go to see the admiral, who has already been interviewed by Mrs. PONTIFEX. As they leave the room, arm-in-arm, they encounter TOM's father and Mrs. PONTIFEX in a similar position. Many amusing incidents follow, terminating with a change of partners, to the delight of all concerned. Thus a satisfactory conclusion is brought to "Naval Engagements."

NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall at the Fountain Inn at Portsmouth.*

DENNIS *discovered asleep in a chair,* L., *with a napkin in his hand.*

DEN. (*talking in his sleep*). Thank you, Captain! thank you! God bless your honor, and thank you a thousand times! Upon my conscience, the army's a fool to the navy for generosity! (*after a pause*) Och, Colonel, and is all this money for me? By my soul the navy must knock under to the army for generosity, any way. (*bell,* L., *waking*) What bell is that? (*bell*) Oh, no hurry; it's only the travellers' room. (*sleeps.*)

Enter SHORT, L., *returning from market.*

SHORT. How plaguy dear the fish is, to be sure! That won't do. While the fishmongers make me pay such rascally prices, I shall never be able to charge my customers above twice what I give! there's some infernal roguery somewhere. (*seeing* DENNIS) Well, I'm sure! this is a pretty time of day to go to sleep! I'll indulge him with an Irish wake. (*goes close to him, and bawls in his ear*) Dennis!

DEN. Coming. (*starts up and nearly knocks* SHORT *down*) Och! murder! master dear! is it you called out Dennis?

SHORT (L.). It was. But you have nearly killed me.

DEN. (R.). Sure, I'm sorry it's asleep I was; I was was quite blocked up.

SHORT. And I was almost knocked down.

DEN. Sure, I didn't go to do it.

SHORT. How did you come to do it?

DEN. There's not a jury in England that wouldn't say my pushing you was accidental death. Arn't you my master? and wouldn't my running against you be running against my own interest?

SHORT. But what buisness had you to be asleep at eleven o'clock in the morning? or, indeed, what business has a waiter *ever* to go to sleep?

DEN. Ah! master, now, don't be hard upon me. Sure the young gentlemen that dined up stairs yesterday, never went home to their mammies till seven this morning, and it's the devil a bit of a bed I've had.

SHORT. You don't say so! did they all stay till seven?

DEN. They did, sir.

SHORT. And were they drinking all the time?

DEN. They were, sir.

SHORT. Why, it was enough to make 'em all ill.

DEN. You may say that, sir.

SHORT. A pretty penny it will cost their poor parents.

DEN. It's to be hoped they're not very poor parents, sir.

SHORT. Don't you joke upon such a subject, Dennis. I'm quite shocked to hear of such young men drinking so much—without eating.

DEN. Sure they'd the devil's own supper at two, sir.

SHORT. I'm glad of that, for so much drinking without eating is bad for everybody. Did they order any breakfast before they went?

DEN. Some coffee, sir.

SHORT. It would have been better for all parties if they had had a complete breakfast; however, charge it as a breakfast, and it may serve as a warning to them. Young men who drink hard over night are sure to pay for it in the morning.

DEN. Very true, sir. Are you quite sure I didn't hurt you, sir?

SHORT. I'm quite sure you *did*. Has there been any arrival while I've been out?

DEN. Yes, sure, sir. There's ould Admiral Kingston in No. 8.

SHORT. Anybody with him?

DEN. A young lady, sir.

SHORT. What is she?

DEN. What is she? faith, she's mighty pretty.

SHORT. I mean, who is she?

DEN. Who is she? that I don't know, sir.

SHORT. Have they ordered anything?

DEN. They have, sir.

SHORT. What?

DEN. A pair of horses, sir.

SHORT (*laughing*). A pair of horses! Did they order anything to eat?

DEN. Nothing but the horses, sir.

SHORT. Anybody else come?

DEN. Yes, sir; there's a young naval officer in No. 14.

SHORT. Anybody with him?

DEN. A middle-aged female; supposed to be his mother.

SHORT. What's his name?

DEN. I don't know, sir.

SHORT. Has *he* ordered anything?

DEN. He has, sir.

SHORT. At last—what is it?

DEN. He ordered me to hold my tongue when I asked——

SHORT. Is your tongue anything to eat, pray?

DEN. It's to be hoped not, sir, for I bit it once, and I didn't like it.

SHORT. Well, I can make nothing of you, so I shall go and see what I can make of them. The Admiral is an old customer, and he must do as he likes; but the youngster shall eat something, whether he's hungry or not.

DEN. That's right, master; make him eat something, if it's only just that you may put down upon paper that he has.

SHORT. I know what I'm about, Dennis.

DEN. The divil a doubt of it, sir. You're not such a fool as you look.

SHORT. Whereas you, on the contrary, don't look such a fool as you are (*going*.)

DEN. Long life to your gentility, master; for you're never behindhand at returning a compliment. [*Exeunt at opposite sides.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the same, with* C. *doors and doors* R. *and* L. 2 E. MRS. COL. PONTIFEX *and* LIEUT. KINGSTON *discovered; the former at work on settee,* C., *small work-table and basket before her; the latter* R. C., *facing the audience, with his legs across a chair, his hands crossed on the back of it and his chin resting on his hands. The room is furnished with round table,* R., *covered with writing materials, books, portfolio of prints, vase of flowers, etc.; sofa,* L., *and chairs, covered with chintz furniture; the settee and two chairs, on which* MRS. PONTIFEX *and the* LIEUTENANT *are seated must be set in front of the second grooves, so that the third scene may close up, leaving them on the stage, with the side doors as used in this scene, and painted to match the third.*

MRS. P. (C.). A penny for your thoughts, Kingston dear.

LIEUT. K. (R. C.). They're not worth it.

MRS. P. Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself, for you can't have been thinking of me.

LIEUT. K. Indeed I was. (*rises, and walks restlessly to and fro*) I never did know anything so worrying, so teasing, so perplexing in my life. (*resumes his position.*)

MRS P. As I am?

LIEUT. K. No, no! not you.

MRS P. A penny for your thoughts *now*, Kingston dear.

LIEUT. K. My dear Mrs. Pontifex, I assure you they are not worth it.

MRS. P. Now, Kingston dear, why do you call me Mrs. Pontifex? It seems very formal to a woman whom you are about to marry. When the late Col. Pontifex—*then* only Captain Pontifex—was making his addresses to me he always called me Selina.

LIEUT. K And *I'll* call you Selina if you wish it.

MRS. P. Now, Kingston dear, that's very kind of you—very. You're not annoyed with me for alluding to poor, dear Colonel Pontifex, are you?

LIEUT. K. Who? I? Oh, by no means. (*relapsing into thought*) Died at Gibraltar about three years since.

MRS. P. (*rising and coming to him*). I'm quite aware of that; but what on earth makes you mention it just now, Kingston dear.

LIEUT K. (*rising*). I beg your pardon—I was thinking aloud. The fact is that my head is full of my approaching interview with my father, and I was wondering how he would receive——

MRS. P. How he would receive you?

LIEUT. K. No, no! I have no fear about that.

MRS. P. How he would receive *me*, then?

LIEUT. K. No, not exactly you.

MRS. P. Kingston dear, there's a mystery; I have thought there was for some time past, and now I'm sure of it; so don't attempt to deny it, but give me an explanation, *and* a chair.

LIEUT. K. I beg you a thousand pardons. (*gives her a chair,* L. C., *they sit*—MRS. PONTIFEX *makes herself up to listen*—LIEUT. K. *relapses into thought.*)

MRS. P. (R. C., *after a pause*). Well——

LIEUT. K. (L. C.). Are you speaking to me?

MRS. P. Oh! Yes, I *was* speaking to you, and I should think you very well knew what about; however, to prevent the possibility of mistake, I'll tell you again. There is evidently some uneasiness in your mind about meeting your father. You have always told me that you

lived and parted with him on the best of terms, and therefore I am bound to suppose that the uneasiness relates in some way to me. We are within ten miles of his house, and, as we say in the army, I demand an explanation.

LIEUT. K. Then, Selina, as we say in the navy, you must have it; but it's very awkward—upon my life it is. (*aside*) How *shall* I tell her. (*aloud*) You know my father?

MRS. P. (R.). No, I don't know your father.

LIEUT. K. (L.). No, I know; but you know what I mean.

MRS. P. Well—go on.

LIEUT. K. My father and I have ever lived together, as I have often told you, on the best of terms.

MRS. P. Yes.

LIEUT. K. More like brothers than father and son.

MRS. P. Yes.

LIEUT. K. With but one opinion, as it were, between us upon every subject.

MRS. P. Yes.

LIEUT. K. No jealousy——

MRS. P. No.

LIEUT. K. No concealment——

MRS. P. No.

LIEUT. K. No mistrust——

MRS. P. No.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). Confound her monosyllables, she doesn't help me out in the least. (*aloud*) You have no idea how curiously well we agreed.

MRS. P. I ought to have a very good idea of it, for you repeat it often enough.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). It's of no use, I must bring it out somehow. (*aloud*) It went even to this extent—we had but one opinion about marriage.

MRS. P. And that was——

LIEUT. K. That it was a point on which every person had a right to please himself, without reference to the opinion of relation or friend. This was the very last topic we discussed two years ago, when I left England for Gibraltar, where I had the happiness of becoming acquainted with you. Now, considering that I was just five-and-twenty, and an only son, and that my father was a widower of five-and-fifty, with a large fortune, I think our sentiments argue considerable liberality on both sides.

MRS. P. Well! I think they do, Kingston dear; and such being the case, there can be no doubt that your father will cheerfully consent to our marriage.

LIEUT. K. No—exactly—but——

MRS. P. But what? Your're getting mysterious again.

LIEUT K. Why, the truth is, that in some cases it is possible for people to agree too well; and in giving each other a *carte blanche* upon the subject of matrimony, there was one reservation—I can't help it, and so you must pardon it—we entered into an engagement that neither of us was to marry a woman of an age unsitable to his own; this, little thinking into whose delightful society I was going to be thrown, I, in a moment of indiscretion, agreed to; and if either broke the engagement, we agreed——

MRS. P. You agreed to quarrel, I suppose?

LIEUT. K. Not exactly, but it *is* awkward—isn't it?

MRS. P. I don't know that. Some people are more reasonable than others. *I* see nothing so very unsuitable in our ages.

LIEUT. K. Nor I. In short, I never thought about it.

MRS. P. I am not a giddy girl, to be sure.

LIEUT. K. No, *that* you're not.

MRS. P. Nor are you a decrepit old man.

LIEUT. K. Certainly not; and so if you'll put on your bonnet, we'll order a chaise, be off at once to my dad's, and know the worst of it.

MRS. P. You're quite right, Kingston dear; anything is better than suspense. You always like to know the worst of a thing, that's the best of it. [*Exit*, C. D.

LIEUT. K. Yes, we'll be off to my dad's, tell our story, throw ourselves upon his generosity——

Enter SHORT, L. 2 E.

ask for his consent, and—(*meeting* SHORT) who the devil are you?

SHORT. Short, sir; master of this inn.

LIEUT. K. Short? why you haven't been here long, Short?

SHORT. No, sir; short of a twelvemonth.

LIEUT. K. I thought I remembered that I didn't recollect you.

SHORT. Would you please to take anything, sir?

LIEUT. K. Yes; I am going to take myself off directly.

SHORT. Then I should recommend a nice mutton cotelet, sir.

LIEUT. K. (*impatiently*). Mutton devil!

SHORT. As you please, sir,—but devils are more commonly taken for supper; a nice mutton cotelet I should say for *you*, and a broiled partridge for the lady.

LIEUT. K. I haven't time to wait.

SHORT. Then, sir, decidedly some cold chicken and tongue.

LIEUT. K. My good friend, I'm not well.

SHORT. Oh! I beg your pardon, sir. You wish for some soup.

LIEUT. K. I don't wish for any such thing. I am well enough in health, but I am fatigued—and bothered—and low spirited.

SHORT. If I *might* suggest, sir, I should say there is nothing better than a sandwich, and a couple of glasses of champagne, for any one who is rather low.

LIEUT. K. Then, my friend, as you seem *rather low*, you had better swallow them yourself. Order me a chaise and a pair of horses.

SHORT. Where for, sir?

LIEUT. K. I want to go about ten miles on the London road—to Admiral Kingston's, in short. I dare say you know it.

SHORT. Oh, yes; I know it, sir. Do *you* know *him?*

LIEUT. K. I ought—he's my father.

SHORT. You don't say so, sir; then, sir, to see your father, you needn't go farther, for your father is nearer than you think for.

LIEUT. K. What! is he in Portsmouth, this morning?

SHORT. He's in this very house.

LIEUT. K. My father in this very house? Why, I haven't seen him for these two years. You have absolutely given me a palpitation in the heart.

SHORT. Old sherry, sir, is considered an excellent thing for that.

LIEUT. K. Now don't bother me about old sherry, but lead the way to my father's apartment. Or stay, tell me the number of it.

SHORT. No. 8, sir.

LIEUT. K. Now, stand clear of the gangway, and I'll soon find it.

[*Pushes him aside, and exit*, L.

SHORT. Let me see—for I suspect that this encounter will turn out luckily for me. They were all four going to the Admiral's;—good! They can't all four go in one chaise;—good! The Admiral and his son can't part the moment they meet;—good! and the two ladies can't go

in one chaise, and leave the two gentlemen to go in the other;—good! It follows, therefore, that they must all stop here and order a dinner;—good! very good!

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same—the* ADMIRAL'S *two doors in flat,* R. *and* L.

LIEUT. K. (*opening* L. D. F., *and rushing in*). My dear father! I am delighted to find—(*stops and looks about*) No one here? What an ass that landlord is! (*rushes out again,* R. D. F.)

Enter, at another door, R., ADMIRAL KINGSTON.

ADMIRAL. It's time we were off; or else that youngster will be at home before me. (*goes to door of inner room,* R. 2 E., *and knocks*) Mary, my dear! Mary!

MISS M. (*within*). Coming, grandpapa.

ADM. (*coming away from the door*). Pshaw! I wish the little baggage would leave off that silly custom of calling me grandpapa.

Enter MISS MORTIMER, R. 2. E.

MISS M. Here I am, grandpapa. What do you want?

ADM. Why, my dear, in the first place, I want you to leave off calling me grandpapa, now that we are going to be man and wife.

MISS M. (R.). I'll try, but I think it will be very difficult; I have been used to it so long. You know you taught me to call you so yourself when I was a little girl and used to sit upon your knee.

ADM. (L.). That's very true, my dear; but that was twelve or fourteen years ago, and it was a joke. I have changed my opinion since, and now I think it's no joke.

MISS M. Well, just as you like, grand——I mean, just as you like, sir.

ADM. No, I don't like "sir," neither.

MISS M. What then?

ADM. Why, to say the truth, there *is* a little awkwardness about it. My Christian name, as you know, is Theodore; but as there is *rather* more than the usual difference between our ages, perhaps that would sound a little romantic. Suppose you call me Admiral?

MISS M. I shall like that better than anything, for I hope you don't think that I am going to marry you because you're rich.

ADM. (*taking her hand*). Delightful little creature! I may flatter myself, then, that you are not induced to consent to this step for the sake of my money?

MISS M. Oh dear, no!

ADM. (*aside*). Frank, confiding soul! I can't deny myself the luxury of hearing a further confession. (*aloud*) You marry me, then, my dear Mary, for my——

MISS M. For your rank, to be sure.

ADM. (*letting go of her, and aside*). Oh, confound the rank!

MISS M. You remember that I used to read of Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and Jarvis, until I always told papa that I would marry an admiral; though, to be sure, I little thought my words would ever come true.

ADM. Well, my love, we won't pursue that subject any farther just at present. My son has landed here this morning from Gibraltar; I

have missed him somehow, and I suppose he has taken a chaise, and gone post-haste home to see me. Your father has given me leave to take you over and introduce you to him; so I have ordered horses to my carriage, and I want you to be ready in five minutes.

Miss M. I won't be two. I haven't seen my old playfellow, Tommy Kingston, since he first went to sea—a little bit of a midshipman.

Adm. He's only a lieutenant *now*.

Miss M. I don't care a straw about his rank; I like him for himself.

Adm. (*aside*). I would change ranks with the young dog to have her say that of me. (*aloud*) You must bear in mind, my dear, that you and Tom are not of an age to be playfellows now.

Miss M. Aren't we? Oh, la! I forgot I was going to be his mother.

Adm. And there is another thing that I wish to mention to you. I have a particular reason for not letting my son, *Lieutenant* Kingston, see you until after I have had some conversation with him.

Miss M. La! grand—sir!—admiral! how mysterious you are. If there's a secret, do tell it me.

Adm. No, no, there's no great secret about it, only——Come now, put on your things.

Miss M. I won't go till you tell me what all this means. If I'm to be Mrs. Admiral Kingston, I ought to know everything that you know.

Adm. Well, well, you *are* to be Mrs. Admiral Kingston, and you *shall* know—but it's really nothing. I only want to see my son first, to inform him of my intended marriage—to prepare him for it—to break it to him, as it were.

Miss M. Break it to him? what, do you think it will shock him?

Adm. Shock him! Oh, no!

Miss M. What then?

Adm. Why, he might object to it.

Miss M. Has he any right to object to it?

Adm. Certainly not—that is—not any natural right.

Miss M. Well, then, it wouldn't signify.

Adm. (*aside*). The little baggage has got the weather-gage of me, and she won't give me a chance. (*aloud*) I don't say that it would signify; but he is my son, and can't you understand that I would not willingly hurt his feelings.

Miss M. I don't understand anything about it, sir; do you expect that he will want to marry me himself?

Adm. Want to marry you? Oh! I've no fear of that.

Miss M. Well, he *might*, you know; there's no knowing.

Adm. (*aside*). Egad! it's possible that he might; and that's another reason for my seeing him first.

Miss M. I shall find out what all this means, some day or other. You tell me that you are as anxious as possible to see your son, and yet you seem so fidgety at the idea of seeing him, that you don't know what to do.

Adm. I fidgety at the idea of seeing my son? Come, I like that!

Miss M. (R.). Indeed you are, Admiral; fidgety and nervous to a degree.

Enter Dennis, L. F.

Adm. (C.) I nervous? and about meeting Tom? that's capital—that really is capital!

Den. (L.). Lieutenant Kingston, sir, R. N.

Adm. (*jumping round*). Who do you say, sir?

Miss M. I say, Admiral—"*I* nervous? *I* fidgety?"

ADM. Be quiet one moment, there's a good girl. (*to* DENNIS) What is it you say ?

DEN. Lieutenant Kingston, sir, R.N., has been looking for your honor all over the house.

ADM. He hasn't been here ?

DEN. I beg your pardon, sir ; he was here a little while ago, and, as he told me there was nobody in the room, I thought I'd come in and let you know that he couldn't find you.

ADM. Where is he now ?

ADM. Faith, sir, he's everywhere at the same time, for he doesn't stop more than two minutes in one place.

ADM. Now, Mary, my love, oblige me by retiring to your own room till I call you. (*leading her towards the door.*)

MISS M. You *shall* own something or other to me before I go, that I'm determined—aren't you nervous ?

ADM. Well, well ! a little—now, go in.

MISS M. Aren't you fidgety ?

ADM. The least thing in life. There—go and——

MISS M. Isn't there a mystery ?

ADM. Yes, there is. Now *pray* go in.

MISS M. I knew there was a mystery. [*Exit into room* R. 2. E.

ADM. Waiter !—whatever your name is—go in.

DEN. Dennis, sir ! my name is Dennis.

ADM. Well, Dennis, with all my heart——

DEN. Oh ! bless you, sir, that's not a bit like it. Dennis Magrath is my name.

ADM. The devil take your name.

DEN. The devil take my name, sir ? Och, never, sir ! The devil's not enough of a gentleman to be allowed to take the name of Magrath ; though there's none of the Magraths that isn't universally allowed to have a bit of the devil in them.

ADM. Now, sir, hold your tongue, and listen to my orders.

DEN. To be sure, sir.

ADM. The young gentleman you spoke of is my son.

DEN. Your son ? then you're his father ?

ADM. Do keep silence—I don't wish to see him *here ;* I mean, not in this room. Go you, therefore, and find him, and tell him that I am not yet come back.

DEN. Maybe he won't believe *me*, sir ; because he's so mighty eager to see you. Hadn't I better go tell him that you told me yourself, you wasn't here ?

ADM. Take your own way, but get him to his room, and I'll follow him there.

DEN. Consider the thing done, sir. [*Exit*, L. F.

ADM. It is a devilish hard case that a man is to live to the age of five-and-fifty with a fair reputation for courage, and then to be, all on a sudden, half afraid of meeting his own son. [*Exit*, L. F.

MISS M. (*opens the door*, R. 2. E., *and peeps out*). It is astonishing how curious women are ! Here I am peeping out, and I have no reason to give for doing so half as strong as that I was desired not. The Admiral has sailed, and the coast is clear—there's no enemy's cruiser in sight, and I shall venture out. (*goes to door*, L. F., *and listens*) I hear no one—I'll open the door. (*opens it gently*) Gracious ! there's somebody coming. (*attempts to close the door, which* LIEUT. K. *pulls open.*)

LIEUT K. (*entering*). Don't shut the door, old gentleman ! I've found you at last—a lady !

MISS M. (R.). A stranger! (*turning away and aside*) I remember him, though he doesn't remember me; but I mustn't appear to know him, or the Admiral will be angry.

LIEUT. K. I beg your pardon. I fear you must have thought me very rude, but I took you for Admiral Kingston.

MISS M. It is the first time I have been so much honored, sir.

LIEUT. K. I mean I took this for Admiral Kingston's room.

MISS M. You are quite right, sir. He will return immediately. I am about to retire, and if you will take a chair, I have no doubt you will see him in five minutes.

LIEUT. K. Nay, madam! rather allow *me* to retire. I couldn't think of causing you to leave your—to leave his—to leave this room. (*aside*) Who the deuce can she be?

MISS M. (*going*). I have only one word more to say, sir—you will particularly oblige me by not mentioning to the Admiral that you have seen me.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). What on earth does that mean? (*aloud*) One moment, ma'am, pray. Have I the honor of addressing a relation of Admiral Kingston?

MISS M. Not exactly, sir; but I think *I* have.

LIEUT. K. You have the advantage of me.

MISS M. (*curtesying*). And I mean to keep it.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). How provoking she is. (*aloud*) Excuse me, but you seem aware that I am the Admiral's son; you will not, therefore, wonder at my natural curiosity upon a subject which—in short—madam—Is my father married?

MISS M. Not that I am aware of, sir.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). That's some relief. (*aloud*) Then—pardon my asking—are you here with him?

MISS M. How can I be, when he is absent?

LIEUT. K. No—but I mean—is he here with you?

MISS M. The same answer applies.

LIEUT. K. There is some mystery.

MISS M. There is, indeed.

LIEUT. K. You own it?

MISS M. And the Admiral owns it.

LIEUT. K. It must and shall be cleared up.

MISS M. Will you promise me that?

LIEUT. K. I will.

MISS M. Then you are a very delightful young man—that I will say. (*going towards the door of her room*, R.)

LIEUT. K. And you're a most extraordinary young woman—that I must say.

MISS M. And so ends the first interview between Lieutenant Thomas Kingston, R. N.——

LIEUT. K. (*eagerly*). *And?*

MISS M. (*curtesying*). His most obedient servant.

[*Exit into room* R. 2. E.

LIEUT. K. A young lady in my father's apartments, who knows him and knows me, but whom I don't know, and who declines to tell me who she is! I suspect the old gentleman is running a little wild. (*takes a chair*) Well! when one can't understand a thing the best way is to sit down quietly (*sits*) and wait patiently for an explanation. (*jumping up*) I can't stop here by myself. [*Exit*, L. D. F.

SCENE IV.—*Same as Scene II.—The* LIEUTENANT'S *apartments, as before.*

ADM. (*knocking without, and calling*, L.). Ship ahoy! Tom, my boy, where are you, (*entering*) Tom, you rascal, where are you, I say?

MRS. P. (*from her room*, C.). Is that *you*, Kingston dear?

ADM. (*starting*). Who the devil can that be?

MRS. P. (*entering, and speaking as she enters*, C.). I say, is that *you*, Kingston dear? (*starts on meeting* ADMIRAL) Bless me!

ADM. (L.). I certainly am Kingston, ma'am; but I am not so fortunate as to be dear to you, that I know of!

MRS. P. (R.). I beg your pardon, sir——

ADM. Don't apologize, ma'am, pray. (*aside*) She's a very nice-looking woman.

MRS. P. I presume you are looking for Mr. Kingston?

ADM. Just so, ma'am.

MRS. P. Is there anything I can do for you when he returns?

ADM. You're very kind, ma'am. My principal business with him is to embrace him.

MRS. P. Sir!

ADM. Don't be alarmed, ma'am—I'm his father.

MRS. P. (*aside*). The Admiral! What a nice-looking man! (*aloud*) You are aware, sir, that I had not the honor of knowing you. Mr. Kingston will be here, I dare say, in two or three minutes.

ADM. I was rightly directed, then; and these are his apartments?

MRS P. If they were not, sir, *I* should not be here.

ADM. Indeed! (*aside*) That's very extraordinary!

MRS. P. (*aside*). I've made a foolish speech.

ADM. You will excuse the natural anxiety of a father; I have not seen my son for two years, and after what you have said, it behoves me to ask a question which I trust you will see the propriety of answering candidly—are you his wife?

MRS. P. No, sir, I am not.

ADM. Then, ma'am, I very much fear that you must be——

MRS. P. (*interrupting him, and curtesying*). Nothing of the kind, sir, I assure you.

ADM. Will you oblige me by telling me who you are?

MRS. P. (R.). You must excuse me; I think I hear your son returning. I really must beg to retire, although I regret to own that appearance, at this particular moment, is against me. I can't exactly explain why I can't explain, but when you see your son he will explain every thing. (*curtesys, and re-enters room*, C.)

ADM. (L.). Yes, ma'am, and *dis*-appearance at this particular moment is against you, too. A lady in my son's apartments who refuses to tell me who she is! and who says if they were not his apartments, *she* shouldn't be here! I suspect the young gentleman is running a little wild.

Door opens, L. 2 D., *and* LIEUT. K. *enters hastily.*

LIEUT. K. (*stopping on seeing his father*). What! Admiral!

ADM. What! Tom, my boy! come to my arms, you dog. (LIEUT. K. *runs to him—they embrace.*)

LIEUT K. (L.). And how are you, sir?

ADM. Hearty as a buck, my boy, thank you; hearty as a buck, fresh as a four-year-old, and jolly as a sand-boy. How has two years in the Mediterranean agreed with you?

LIEUT. K. Oh! very well, sir.

ADM. So I see—so I see. You're looking famously. I thought you were gone home, and I should have been off after you, if I had not heard accidentally that you were here.

LIEUT. K. I suspect we have missed one another by being in the same house, sir.

ADM. Not unlikely, faith. But no matter for that now, I have found you, and by George, I'm as glad as if I had found a large bag of money; —nay, more so; for I don't want money, and I do want my son. (*shaking hands with him again.*)

LIEUT. K. You forget our old compact, sir. I am not your son—we are brothers!

ADM. True, boy, true; we are indeed, and always were, more like brothers than father and son. No concealment——

LIEUT. K. No restraint——

ADM. No evasion——

LIEUT. K. No black looks——

ADM. No disobedience——

LIEUT. K. No harsh commands——

ADM. Well, well, we won't compliment one another any more. I believe we both went upon the right system, and we can't do better than stick to it; and so get a chair, (LIEUTENANT *places chairs*) sit you down, and let us have a chat together upon the old principle.

LIEUT. K. (L.). Without saying anything about father and son, sir, I must say I think it was a little curious that any two men of such different ages as you and I are, should have agreed so exactly upon every subject that could be framed.

ADM. (R.). Well, I think it was.

LIEUT. K. I remember that we both liked the same pursuits——

ADM. We did.

LIEUT. K. The same amusements——

ADM. We did.

LIEUT. K. The same people——

ADM. We did.

LIEUT. K. The same things to eat and drink——

ADM. We did.

LIEUT. K. And, what was more singular still, though I was an only son, and you were a rich widower, we even agreed upon the subject of marriage.

ADM. Eh?

LIEUT. K. Why, we did, sir—didn't we?

ADM. Oh! yes—yes; I believe we did.

LIEUT. K. *Believe* we did, sir? Why, wasn't it understood between us, that neither was to make the slightest objection, let the other marry whomever he might?

ADM. (*aside*). Perhaps he has forgot the other part of the agreement. (*aloud*) To be sure it was—to be sure it was. (*shaking hands with him.*)

LIEUT. K. That is—provided——

ADM. (*letting suddenly go of him, and aside*). Oh! the devil take it! he has *not* forgotten it. Can he suspect?

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). The Admiral seems annoyed—he can't have any suspicion, surely. (*they both turn aside, and relapse into thought. After a pause of mutual embarrassment, the* ADMIRAL *speaks.*)

ADM. Tom!

LIEUT. K. Sir. (*another pause.*)

ADM. Tom! Why don't you go on speaking, Tom?

LIEUT. K. I have nothing more to say, sir. (*another pause.*)

ADM. Pray, Mr. Tom, what is the meaning of this sudden awkwardness between us?

LIEUT. K. I really can't explain, sir.

ADM. It never used to be so.

LIEUT. K. That's just what I was thinking, sir.

ADM. I think it's a great pity.

LIEUT. K. So do I, sir.

ADM. (*aside*). I want to break my marriage to him, but I can't yet. I'll tax him about that lady.

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). It won't do to talk to him about this marriage while he's in this mood. I'll ask him who his female friend is.

ADM. (*aloud and sharply*). Tom!

LIEUT. K. (*same tone*). Sir!

ADM. I won't bear this any longer.

LIEUT. K. That's right, sir.

ADM. (*turning his chair, and facing* LIEUTENANT). Sir, I paid a visit to *your* apartments in your absence, and there *I* found a lady——

LIEUT. K (*turning his chair, and facing* ADMIRAL). Sir, *I* paid a visit to *your* apartments in your absence, and there *I* found a lady——

ADM. (*rises*). Sir, that lady refused to tell me who she was——

LIEUT. K. (*rises*). Sir, that lady refused to tell me who she was——

ADM. Well, sir, I shall set you a good example; you won't explain, and so I will (*aside*) Now for it. (*resuming their seats. Aloud*) You alluded just now to our old engagement, that either of us were to marry any one he pleased.

LIEUT. K. I did, sir. (*aside*) What is he after?

ADM Well, without further preface, I am going to be married.

LIEUT. K. You, sir?

ADM. Have I your free consent?

LIEUT. K. Oh, surely, sir; that was the engagement. Provided——

ADM. Don't be in a hurry; I'm coming to that. I remember the proviso; and I want you to release me from it. I am going to marry a young woman——

LIEUT. K. A young woman? (*aside*) Surely not the girl I saw in his room! Oh, I see, he has got some scent of my intention, and this is a pretence to try me. I must appear to consent.

ADM Well?

LIEUT. K. Why, sir, although I had, and indeed have a very strong opinion upon the subject, I admit there may be *a* case in which particular prejudices ought to be waived.

ADM. Spoken like a man of sense. Tom, your voyage has improved you every way. (*aside*) That difficulty is soon got over.

LIEUT. K. I'm glad you think so, sir. (*hesitatingly*) I'm going to be married, too, sir.

ADM. You? Pooh! nonsense!

LIEUT. K. Fact, sir, on my honor.

ADM. Well, with all my heart. Who is the girl?

LIEUT. K. She is not exactly a girl, sir.

ADM. Why, you're not going to marry a boy?

LIEUT. K. No, sir; but it's curious enough—I was just screwing up my courage to ask your consent to my marrying a lady some fifteen years older than myself.

ADM. Were you really! (*aside*) Zounds, he can't mean the woman I saw in his room—Oh, no, the young rascal is shamming, just to see what I will say; but I'll disappoint him. (*aloud*) I quite agree with you, Tom, that there may be *a* case in which particular prejudices ought to be waived.

LIEUT. K. Sir, you are liberal to a degree (*shaking hands with him. Aside*) I had no notion he would have given way so easily.

ADM. And now, sir, as I have led the van in the way of explanation, perhaps you'll follow in the wake. Who is the lady in that room?

LIEUT. K. That is *the* lady, sir.

ADM. *The* lady? Why, is there but one lady in the world?

LIEUT. K. Only one that I am going to be married to.

ADM. Come, nonsense, nonsense! you're joking.

LIEUT. K. I assure you, sir, I never was more serious. The lady is the widow of the late Col. Pontifex, and although, as I said, some fifteen years older than I am, she is a very charming woman, and a most delightful companion. We came home in the same packet; but I first met her two years ago at Gibraltar, where she was considered the most attractive woman in the garrison.

ADM. Very likely, sir; but the most attractive woman at Gibraltar is sure to be superseded the moment she arrives in England. Tom, Tom, you're going to make a noodle of yourself. How often have I seen youngsters on service in the colonies commit this folly. They come out fresh from England, and make a joke of every woman they see; by degrees they grow more civil to them, until, at last, they select one from the flock for particular attention, and because she is the best *there*, they flatter themselves she must be the very best everywhere, and so marry. (*they rise.*)

LIEUT. K. Well, sir, it can't be helped now; and so, as you have no intention of marrying yourself, I hope you will——

ADM. What do you mean, sir? Didn't I tell you that I was going to be married? Didn't you see the young lady in my apartments?

LIEUT. K. (*laughing*). My dear sir, you can't mean to *her?* Why she must be thirty years younger than you are.

ADM. And suppose she is? If there must be a difference in ages, it's far better that the wife should be younger.

LIEUT. K. *Something* younger, yes; but fifteen years older is better than *thirty* years younger.

ADM. I disagree with you, sir.

LIEUT. K. I differ from you, sir.

ADM. I shall have the dutiful attention of a daughter, combined with the affection of a wife.

LIEUT. K. While I shall find united in one person the fond wife and careful mother.

ADM. Careful grandmother! you'll be nicely henpecked if you marry that widow, depend upon it.

LIEUT. K. Very likely, sir! and you marry that giddy girl, and you'll get your highly respected wig most carefully combed, I promise you.

ADM. Your wife will never let you out of her sight.

LIEUT. K. *Your* wife will constantly let herself out of *yours.*

ADM. You'll be wretched from morning till night.

LIEUT. K. That's my business. You won't know a quiet moment.

ADM That's mine.

LIEUT. K. Well, sir, you may break our engagement, if you will, but I'll never give my consent.

ADM. Nor I.

LIEUT. K. Just now you said there might be cases——

ADM. And so did you.

LIEUT K. I beg your pardon, sir; I said *a* case.

ADM. And so did I.

LIEUT. K. I was alluding to my own.

ADM. I was alluding to *my* own.

LIEUT. K. Well, sir, it appears that we can't agree upon this subject, and so we had better part.

ADM. By all means, sir.

LIEUT. K. Good-bye then, sir. (*going towards inner room*, C.)

ADM. Good bye, sir. (*going towards the outer door*, L.) Pray go to your *widow*.

LIEUT. K. And you, sir—to your boarding-school miss.

Enter at the same time, from C. D., MRS. PONTIFEX, *and, from outer,* MISS MORTIMER, L. 2 E.

MISS M. (L.). My dear Admiral! What *is* the matter?

MRS. P. (R. C.). Kingston dear! What *is* the matter?

ADM. (L. C.). Let me pass, Mary. I won't stay here another minute.

MISS M. (*checking him*). Nay, sir——

LIEUT. K. (R.). Pray stand aside. I wish to leave the room.

MRS. P. (*in an imploring tone*). Kingston dear——

ADM. (*mocking her, and aside*). "Kingston dear,"—she'll make me sick. Come, Mary love, come!

LIEUT. K. (*aside*). "Mary, love!" Well done, old gentleman.

MRS. P. Never mind; it's for you to give way—he's your father.

MISS M. Consider, sir, and make some allowance for your son.

MRS. P. Speak to him, or he'll be gone.

LIEUT. K. Admiral.

ADM. Well, sir?

LIEUT. K. Don't go.

ADM. I will.

LIEUT. K. Stop! (*coming down.*)

ADM. I won't.

LIEUT. K. Well, sir, do as you like; (*crosses to* ADMIRAL *and brings him down*) but there are ladies in the room, and I presume you won't like them to report that we have behaved unlike gentlemen.

ADM. (L.). Well, sir, what do you propose?

LIEUT K. (R.). Why, as it seems that an introduction must take place at some time or other, had not it better be done at once?

ADM. With all *my* heart.

MISS M. Now, come, sir, that's quite right. (*takes hold of his arm, and tries to walk him down towards the centre; he edges her off to side opposite the others.*)

LIEUT. K. (*taking* MRS. PONTIFEX'S *hand, putting her across, and looking the other way*). Selina! allow me to present you to my father—Admiral Kingston. (*she curtseys.*)

ADM. (*bowing, but not looking at her*). Ma'am, your most obedient! (*turns away and looks at pictures as he introduces them*) Mary, my love, that's my son out there—Lieutenant Kingston; Lieutenant Kingston, this is Miss Mary Mortimer.

LIEUT. K. (*starting*). My little playfellow! (*running and shaking hands with her*) How dull I was not to remember you.

ADM. (*uneasy*). Mary!

MRS. P. (*uneasy*). Kingston dear!

ADM. That will do.

MRS. P. That's quite enough. (MISS MORTIMER *goes to* ADMIRAL, *and* LIEUT. K. *to* MRS. PONTIFEX.)

LIEUT. K. You ladies haven't been (*gets to* R.) introduced to each other *now*. Miss Mortimer, allow me to introduce you to Mrs. Pontifex—my intended wife.

ADM. Faugh!

LIEUT. K. "Faugh," indeed!

MISS M. (*to* MRS. P.). Take no notice of it.

LIEUT. K. (R.). Mrs. Pontifex—Miss Mary Mortimer!

ADM. Yes, ma'am! *my* intended wife!

LIEUT. K. Absurd!

MISS M. (L. C.). "Absurd!"

MRS. P. (R. C., *shaking hands with* MISS M.). Never mind what he says—I'm very happy to make your acquaintance.

MISS M. You're very kind.

ADM. It will be rather a short acquaintance, I suspect.

MRS. P. I hope not, sir.

ADM. Then, ma'am, you had better cease to encourage my son in his folly.

MRS. P. Folly, sir?

MISS M. (*soothing her*). Don't be excited.

LIEUT. K. Come, that's pretty well, governor, considering the outrage that *you* are going to commit.

MISS M. Outrage! Mr. Kingston?

MRS. P. (*soothing her*). Pray, be calm.

LIEUT. K. Don't call me Mr. Kingston, Mary.

ADM. I say, do; and don't you call her Mary.

MRS. P. (*to* MISS M.). Don't let *us* be annoyed whatever they say, and then we shall have some chance of their following a good example.

MISS M. An excellent plan; they may say what they like for me.

LIEUT. K. There's something perfectly ridiculous in the notion of a man's marrying a little chit, young enough to be his grand-daughter.

MISS M. "Little chit," and "grand-daughter!" That is rather too much to bear.

MRS. P. Now, you promised that you wouldn't mind anything they said.

MISS M. Yes; but there's a medium.

ADM. I should say it was infinitely preferable to a trumpery boy's marrying a woman old enough to be his grandmother.

MRS. P. (*screaming*). Ah! Who is to bear that, I should like to know?

MISS. M. Now you said *you* would.

MRS. P. Very likely, my dear! but there is reason in all things. Kingston dear! I shall leave the room, and I request you to come with me.

Enter SHORT *and* DENNIS, D. L.

ADM. That's the most sensible proposition I have heard yet. Mary, come with me.

MISS M. (*looking back at* LIEUT. K.). I shall have great pleasure, sir, in leaving the society of the rudest young man in Portsmouth.

LIEUT. K. (*going to her*). Nay, Mary, I had no intention——

ADM. Go away, sir. Come along, love. (*as they are going out at the door*, L. E., SHORT *goes to* ADMIRAL *with bill of fare.*)

SHORT. Won't you please to order dinner, sir?

ADM. No, sir! (*shuts door in his face.*)

MRS. P. Come, Kingston dear. (*he goes to her*—SHORT *follows him, and as they are going through the door-way.*)

SHORT. Won't *you* please to order dinner, sir?

LIEUT. K. No, sir! (*shuts* C. *door in his face.*)

SHORT. They are all mad! (*returns to door* L. D., *and as he is going out.*)

DEN. (*who has followed him*). You had better order the dinner yourself, sir.

SHORT. No, sir! (*shuts door in his face.*)

DEN. I'll not be out of the fashion any way; so I'll say something to myself, bounce out of the room, and bang the door in my own face. "Dennis!" "Sir to you!" "Will *you* order dinner?" "No, sir!"

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Same as Scene I., Act I.—The Hall in the Fountain Inn.*

Enter, R., DENNIS, *cautiously.*

DEN. Master, dear! botheration! the more I searches for master, the more I misses him. [*Exit same way*, R.

Enter, L., SHORT.

SHORT. Surely I heard that stupid fellow Dennis, calling me—why, there he is; Dennis!

Re-enter DENNIS.

DEN. And it's there you are at last, master dear; I'd be mighty glad if you'd just tell me where you've been to?

SHORT. Where have I been? nowhere.

DEN. By the powers! that's just what I thought, for I've looked for you everywhere.

SHORT. The way not to miss a person is to remain in the same place.

DEN. Then I won't easily miss you again, sir; for I'll not leave my present place in a hurry, you may depend upon it.

SHORT. Well, what have you found out?

DEN. Nothing, sir.

SHORT. What did you want to tell me then?

DEN. Why, sir, I wanted to tell you that I've got nothing to tell you; and there's some information in that.

SHORT. Useful information, truly!

DEN. Well, then, I declare it's no fault of mine. I'm willing to serve you through thick and through thin; but if you will have the doors of this respectable inn so amazingly thick, it's quite impossible for the most attentive waiter to hear what people's a-talking about on the other side of 'em.

SHORT. The doors are thin enough; it's your head that's too thick.

DEN. If I thought that I'd have it shaved once a day.

SHORT. Neither the Admiral nor his son has said a word more about the horses they ordered, I believe?

DEN. Not a word, sir! They have both been in their rooms ever since, talking away like fun to their ladies; but for all I could catch, it might as well have been Hebrew they were speaking.

SHORT (*aside*). To send such a noodle as this to listen, is to risk the character of my house without getting any information in exchange. (*aloud*) Now, Dennis, listen to me.

DEN. Yes, sir! (*going.*)

SHORT. Never you listen to anybody again. (*seeing that he is going*) Why don't you listen to me, you rascal?

DEN. You told me not, sir; beside, sir, listeners seldom hear any good of themselves.

SHORT. Go along about your business.

DEN. Ah! now, don't call it business; you're such an elegant master that my business is my pleasure.

SHORT. You're a humbug.

DEN. I'd rather hear you say that than think it any day.

SHORT. Now get away; there's one of the ladies coming.

DEN. (*looking in opposite direction*). So there is, sure enough! (*turns to go off the same way he comes on, and encounters* MISS MORTIMER, R., *entering.* SHORT, *turning to go off*, L., *encounters* MRS. PONTIFEX *entering.*)

SHORT. I beg your pardon, ma'am! [*Exit*, L.

DEN. I ask your pardon, miss. [*Exit.* R.

(*The ladies approach each other, both seeming rather confused.*)

MRS. P. (L., *after a pause*). I am happy to have met you, my dear. I was just coming to knock at your door and ask the favor of a few minutes' conversation with you.

MISS M. (R.). How very odd! I was seeking you, with the same object in view.

MRS. P. That's curious enough.

MISS M. Isn't it?

MRS. P. It is indeed!

MISS M. Very.

MRS. P. (*after a pause*). Well, my dear! what was it you were going to say?

MISS M. Upon my word, when I left my room I thought I knew; but popping upon you so suddenly has put it quite out of my head.

MRS. P. I think I can guess; and moreover I strongly suspect that our motives in seeking each other are very similar. You feel with me the peculiar awkwardness of the circumstances under which we have first met?

MISS M. Indeed, I do.

MRS. P. And you would be glad if, by laying our heads together, we could devise some plan to relieve that awkwardness?

MISS M. Indeed I should.

MRS. P. It seems that the Admiral and his son never had a dispute in their lives till now.

MISS M. Exactly.

MRS. P. I must say, I think that the Admiral is a little unreasonable; because, after all, I am but fifteen years older than *my* Kingston.

MISS M. Well! and I am but thirty years younger than mine.

MRS. P. Yes, my dear; but look at the difference between fifteen and thirty.

MISS M. I do; but look at the difference between a woman and a man; you know that a man ought to be a good many years older than his wife.

MRS. P. Very likely, my dear; but when you are my age you will have learnt that men are not always what they ought to be.

MISS M. Why are you going to marry Lieutenant Kingston?

MRS. P. That is rather an abrupt question; but it is at all events frank, and I will frankly answer it. We were thrown a great deal into each other's society at Gibraltar—he paid me so much attention; he became ill, and I returned that attention; he recovered, expressed his wish to marry me, and I consented.

MISS M. And do you think he still wishes to marry you?

Mrs. P. What an odd girl you are! Certainly I do, or I would release him from his engagement in a moment.

Miss M. Well, that is very good natured of you, though, I must say.

Mrs. P. Now, perhaps you'll tell me why *you* are going to be married?

Miss M. With pleasure. I alway said I would marry an admiral; and papa wishes me to marry Admiral Kingston.

Mrs. P. Well, as matters seem to be settled for both of us, the only rational way is to make the best of them. Now I want the father and the son each to release the other from his engagement, and to be friends as they ought.

Miss M. I don't think the Admiral will ever forgive Tom!

Mrs. P. Tom! my dear?

Miss M. I beg your pardon; we were playfellows as children, and I have never seen him since till to-day—Lieutenant Kingston I mean.

Mrs. P. I should say that Lieutenant Kingston has far more to complain of than his father.

Miss M. I can't say I see that.

Mrs. P. However, my proposition is that you shall go and endeavor to prevail on my intended to forgive his father; while I see whether I can't induce your Admiral to have some compassion for his son.

Miss M. I'll try it, with all my heart; but he was very rude to me an hour ago, you remember.

Mrs. P. My dear child, don't talk about that; remember the Admiral's rudeness to me.

Miss M. Well, I shall do my best. (*crossing* L.)

Mrs. P. And the best, as they say, can do no better.

Miss M. (*stopping and turning*). Mrs. Pontifex.

Mrs. P. (*stopping and turning*). My dear?

Miss M. Don't you make too much love to my fine old English Admiral, or else I shall be jealous.

Mrs. P. I'll take care. And I say, my dear!

Miss M. What say you?

Mrs. P. Lieutenant Kingston, if you please—not Tom.

[*Exeunt, severally*, R. *and* L.

SCENE II.—*Same as Scene III., Act I.—Settee and two chairs as before.*

The Admiral *discovered walking up and down.*

Adm. This is a confounded mess, and I don't see my way out of it. It's the first disagreement that Tom and I ever had, and I must own that I never felt so uncomfortable in my life. (*knock at room door*, E.) Come in.

Enter Dennis, L.

Den. Are you alone, sir?

Adm. I am, and wish to be left alone.

Den. In course, sir. I'm a waiter, and it's my duty to attend to your wishes; but by the same token it's my duty to attend to everybody's wishes; and a lady has sent me to you with a message.

Adm. I'm sorry it's not a gentleman, for I feel monstrously inclined to shoot somebody.

Den. It would shuit the lady if you could see her now, sir!

Adm. Who is she?

DEN. Why, sir, you see some names is hard to remember easily; but I should say the lady's name is Mrs. Halifax, or Paddywhacks.

ADM. Don't you think it was Mrs. Pontifex?

DEN. I don't think at all about it, sir, because I'm sure of it.

ADM. Beg her to walk in.

DEN. (*aside*). "Beg her to *walk* in!" I wonder did he think she was going to *ride* in? (*Exit*, L.

ADM. What the deuce can she have to say to me!

Re-enter DENNIS, L, *conducting* MRS. PONTIFEX.

DEN. (*announcing*). Mrs. ———, that lady, sir?

ADM. Leave the room, sir. (*Exit* DENNIS, L.) Madam, once more your most obedient. Permit me to offer you a chair. (*places one for her* L., *and another for himself at a distance from it.*)

MRS. P. (L.). We have been introduced to each other, Admiral Kingston, under circumstances of a very unpromising nature.

ADM. (R.). Most unpromising, ma'am; most unpromising.

MRS. P. It would give me the sincerest pleasure if, by any means in my power, I could set matters straight between you and your son.

ADM. I dare say it would, ma'am. I can easily understand that.

MRS. P. Will you be candid enough to tell me exactly what you mean?

ADM. Why, ma'am, as I am speaking to a lady, I would rather leave my meaning to her own penetration; but this is no time for overstrained delicacy.

MRS. P. On that point, sir, at all events, you will find that we are agreed.

ADM. Well, then, ma'am, to be plain with you, I can easily understand your readiness to set matters straight between me and my son; because your so doing would lead to your marriage with a good-looking, good-for-nothing, gentlemanly young rascal; with the Queen's commission to his back, and the prospect of a fine fortune in his front.

MRS. P. Self-interest, then, you consider to be my only motive?

ADM. Why, ma'am—to pursue the candid line—I imagine there can't be any violent love on either side when the gentleman is only five-and-twenty, and the lady is——

MRS. P. Turned of forty, sir! Don't hesitate, we are pursuing the "candid" line, you know.

ADM. Madam, I must own that you have anticipated me.

MRS. P. And I shall beg leave to do so again, sir, for I see that you want my assistance. There is a native warmth—a kindness—about your heart sadly at variance with the tone of severity which you are endeavoring to assume towards me.

ADM. (*forgetting himself*). Ma'am, you are very good, (*recovering his tone*) but you are very much mistaken; I have by no means a kind heart. In short, you can't possibly know anything about my heart.

MRS. P. Why, sir, I have listened to its praises from your son for hours together.

ADM. (*aside*). Bless his heart! bless his heart. (*aloud*) It would have been much better if you had never listened to anything my son said.

MRS. P. You are of opinion that I have entrapped your son into a promise of marriage solely because I hoped to share the fortune he expects from you——

ADM. Madam, you have said it.

MRS. P. You think that I have no real regard for his happiness; but

that I would force myself, at the price of that into connection with an ancient and honorable family——

ADM. I never contradict a lady.

MRS. P. In this case you would have done her better justice if you had.

ADM. Can you make that appear?

MRS. P. With the greatest ease. I came here in the hope of inducing you to consent to a marriage which your son had, to use the mildest term, *persuaded* himself, would make him happy. From that son's description of you I had expected to find you kind——

ADM Ah!

MRS. P. Affectionate——

ADM. Ah!

MRS. P. And generous.

ADM. Ah!

MRS. P. Instead of which it seems you are harsh——

ADM. Ma'am!

MRS. P. Unfeeling——

ADM. Ma'am!

MRS P. And unrelenting.

ADM. Ma'am!

MRS. P. We are pursuing the "candid" line, you know, sir, by agreement.

ADM. Yes, madam, but you needn't *cross* the line.

MRS. P. Well, sir, to prove to you, at all events, that you have done me injustice; to show you that I have a real feeling for your son, and none for his fortune, I am willing to make a great sacrifice.

ADM. What! to take the boy with half his money, I suppose.

MRS. P. No, sir; I resign all pretensions to his money.

ADM. (*drawing his chair nearer to her*). What's that you say, madam?

MRS. P. And, rather than prolong an unhappy difference between a hard-hearted father and a persecuted son, I also resign all pretensions to his hand, and release him from his engagement.

ADM. (*drawing his chair quite close to her*). Would it be too much trouble to say that again?

MRS. P. Not at all, sir. Rather than prolong an unhappy difference between a hard-hearted——

ADM. (*interrupting*). I don't mean that part.

MRS. P. I resign all pretensions to his hand, and release him from his engagement.

ADM. Ma'am, you are a most extraordinary woman.

MRS. P. I am glad you think so; (*rising*) and now——

ADM. No, no—sit down, sit down, pray. It is just possible that *you* may have done *me* some injustice; so sit down, pray. (*she sits*) My dear madam, you have surprised me, my dear Mrs. Pontifex, I may say you have astounded me; and, although you have called me harsh, unfeeling and unrelenting, I do assure you that I am not actually deserving of either of those epithets. I'm not easily driven, but I don't like being outdone upon a point of generosity; I won't accept this resignation of yours until I know more about the matter. I'm not a stock, nor a stone; I love my son; you think I don't, but I do—I love that boy dearer than my life; yes, madam, dearer than my life, hard-hearted as I am; and, sooner than see him wretched, I'll consent to his marriage, forego my own, and jump into the sea. (*rises.*)

MRS. P. And now, my dear sir, I beg you to forgive all that I have said; for you are indeed the kind, good, liberal and warm-hearted being your son has always described you to be.

ADM. That boy is a boy of ten thousand, ma'am.

MRS. P. He is indeed; and, such being the case, you will give him your hand, won't you? and bid him forget the momentary unpleasantness that has passed.

ADM. Ma'am! my hand shall be at his service for two purpose: I'll first box the young rascal's ears for being impertinent to his father, and then I'll give him such a grip of friendship as a British sailor has ever ready for his late enemy upon the proclamation of peace.

MRS. P. This is indeed charming; shall we go to him?

ADM. (*taking her hand*). Not yet! Now, don't be in such a hurry—I want to talk with you a little more—you must know that I am getting quite fond of you.

MRS. P. I'm sure, sir, I am very much flattered.

ADM. Not at all, not all; it is your own merit—your own attractions which have in so short a time converted an antipathy into a predilection.

MRS. P. I'm quite delighted, sir.

ADM. Tom loves you, I suppose?

MRS. P. I believe he does.

ADM. I don't wonder at it; he would be a precious fool, and very unlike his father, if he didn't. You mustn't be annoyed with me for my frankness, but I tell you very plainly that I never was so taken with any lady upon a first acquaintance in my life.

MRS. P. Annoyed, my dear sir? Why, to please *you* is the first wish of my heart.

ADM. You don't say so?

MRS. P. Next to that of pleasing your son.

ADM. Ah! hang that Tom! those sons are always in one's way; well, well, say no more about it—he's a lucky dog—but you're too old for him—you are indeed.

MRS. P. Don't say anything about that, sir.

ADM. My dear, I must—candor—you know—candor—you're a charming woman—but, by George, you're too old to marry Tom.

MRS. P. I suspect that I am not the only person in the room who is about to marry one much younger than——

ADM. Now, don't mention that.

MRS. P. Candor—you know, sir—candor.

ADM. Now, pray don't—I confess my folly—I don't know how it came about—I almost wish, for her sake, that it had not come about—she's a dear, good girl.

MRS. P. You would say so again, if you knew all.

ADM. All—what is that?

MRS. P. She is at this moment, I believe, with your son.

ADM. With my son? What the devil for?

MRS. For the same purpose that I came to you—to reconcile you to each other; as I have prospered so well, the work is more than half done. (*going.*)

ADM. Don't let us go just yet.

MRS. P. Nay, sir! Why delay, when good is to be done?

ADM. I don't know—I'm in no hurry; that's all I know—but it shall be as you wish—*everything* shall be as you wish.

MRS. P. (*going*). I'll lead the way then.

ADM. Nay, my dear! let me offer you an arm.

MRS. P. Oh! with pleasure. (*takes it. Walking across the stage with her.*)

ADM. (*stopping*). I wish that dear little girl that I'm going to make a noodle of myself with were your age instead of her own.

MRS. P. It would be better, I must admit.

ADM. And I can't help wishing, for your sake and Tom's, that you were of her age, instead of your own.

MRS. P. That would be better also, I admit.

ADM. You are as candid as you are handsome.

MRS. P. My dear Admiral!

ADM. My dear madam! [*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE III.—*Same as Scene II., Act I.—Set as before.*

Enter LIEUTENANT KINGSTON, C.

LIEUT. K. This is a pretty business! and what to do, I haven't the most distant idea. My father won't give me his consent, that seems very clear; what on earth does he mean to do? Where the deuce is Mrs. Pontifex gone to? and what the devil do you want? (*to* DENNIS, *who knocks and enters*, L.)

DEN. I want you, sir—that is to say—no, sir! it isn't me exactly, that wants you, but it's another lady outside.

LIEUT. K. What lady?

DEN. The young lady, sir, that was with the old gentleman.

LIEUT. K. Miss Mortimer?

DEN. I believe that's her Christian name, sir.

LIEUT. K. Did you say I was here?

DEN. I said I didn't know whether you was or not, sir, but I'd ask you.

LIEUT. K. Show her in.

DEN. I will, sir. [*Exit*, L.

LIEUT. K. What's in the wind now, I wonder?

Re-enter DENNIS, L., *conducting* MISS MORTIMER.

DEN. The lady, sir.

LIEUT. K. Dennis!

DEN. Coming, sir.

LIEUT. K. Leave the room.

DEN. Going, sir. [*Exit.*

LIEUT. K. Won't you sit down? (*moves settee down to* C.)

MISS M. Thank you! (*sits at the extreme end of the settee*) I wish for a few minutes' conversation with you. Perhaps, you will sit down also?

LIEUT. K. (L.). If you wish it—certainly. (*sits at opposite extreme end.*)

MISS M. (L.). We parted children; we meet again under very peculiar circumstances.

LIEUT. K. Very, indeed, madam!

MISS M. "Madam?"

LIEUT. K. Certainly! one must practice respect to one's mother you know.

MISS M. True; I forgot; it is very distressing to me to have witnessed the first disagreement you ever had with your father, and to feel that I am in some measure the cause of it.

LIEUT. K. (*getting a little nearer to her, and as he speaks she gets a little nearer to him*). Your sentiments do equal honor to your head and heart, madam. (*they both get back to their places.*)

MISS M. I am truly glad you think so; I am most anxious to see you reconciled to each other, and if you retain those quick and generous feelings which used to actuate you as a boy, (*during this they again*

approach each other) I am sure that you will readily assist me——Sir? (*they both get back to their places.*)

LIEUT. K. Yes, madam.

MISS M. Now that your first surprise is over at finding that I am going to be married to your father, I should like you to tell me candidly what you think of me.

LIEUT. K. I think you so altered, that it is no wonder I did not recognize you. I think you more beautiful than I ever dreamt you would grow up to be!

MISS M. I didn't mean that.

LIEUT. K. But *I* did though—(*checking himself*) ma'am.

MISS M. I want to know what you think of marrying the Admiral?

LIEUT. K. I think it is one of the most preposterous things I ever heard in my life. I think I have got a very silly old man for a father, and that I am going to have—with the greatest respect—a noodle for a mother.

MISS M. Sir, you are very polite!

LIEUT. K. Well, I can't help it; for upon my soul, Mary—ma'am I mean—it's too ridiculous.

MISS M. You look through a glass of great magnifying power at other people's faults, and reverse it to peep at your own.

LIEUT. K. That's a very fine speech, I dare say; but I don't exactly perceive the application of it.

MISS M. No! Why, what do you imagine people will say about your marrying old Mrs. Pontifex?

LIEUT. K. (*getting up and walking about*). Hollo! am I going to be laughed at? I can't bear that—and I won't bear it—and so you may tell people. If the men laugh at me, they must take the consequence; and if the women laugh at me I'll shoot their husbands, sons, brothers, fathers, and uncles.

MISS M. Dear me! Why, one would think you were the whole navy of England, instead of only a lieutenant in it.

LIEUT. K. I won't bear it, I'm determined!

MISS M. Well, well; sit down, pretty dear—sit down upon the same sofa with its ma—and it shan't be laughed at.

LIEUT. K. (*sitting down*). Now don't, Mary—don't, ma'am. If there is one thing that I hate more than another, it is ridicule; deserved or not, I feel just the same.

MISS M. It is a pity that one so sensitive should have exposed himself to it; but I won't say any more about it. If I have vexed you, forgive me. (*offers her hand*)

LIEUT. K. (*getting close to her, and taking her hand*). Oh, madam! —D—n madam! I can't say it any more, and I won't!—Oh, Mary, now you are, indeed, like the frank and affectionate child I once knew you.

MISS M. You mustn't call me Mary, Tom.

LIEUT. K. Not when you call me Tom?

MISS M. Did I call you Tom? I beg your pardon.

LIEUT. K. Don't apologize. It puts me in mind of old times.

MISS M. Do you know where Mrs. Pontifex is?

LIEUT. K. Never mind her just now.

MISS M. Oh, but I must; she's with the Admiral.

LIEUT. K. What! are you jealous?

MISS M. Not the least. Are you?

LIEUT. K. No!

MISS M. She seems to me to be a very delightful woman.

LIEUT. K. So she is—so she is! Oh, *that* she *is!* I certainly wish,

for her sake, that she was something nearer my own age—yours, now, for instance.

MISS M. I'm afraid that wish will grow upon you.

LIEUT. K. What is she gone to the Admiral for?

MISS M. To ask him to consent to your marriage! and *I* came to ask you to consent to his.

LIEUT. K I can't do it. It goes against my conscience. (*rises.*)

MISS M. (*rising*). You must! you must indeed!

LIEUT. K. I cannot—I feel that I cannot.

MISS M. That which must be must be; why then should you refuse to make the best of it? Come, Lieutenant Kingston, for my sake—come—Tom—for Mary's sake, consent.

LIEUT. K. For your sake, Mary, I will consent to anything.

MISS M. (*rising*). Come with me then, at once, and let me see you on your old terms with your father.

LIEUT. K. Not this moment; there's no such absolute hurry. I think I have consented too soon. Mary, sit down and persuade me again.

MISS M. No, no! it must not be; and you must leave off calling me Mary.

LIEUT. K. Well, if it must be so, for the the last time, at least, Mary, take my arm.

MISS M. Will you hold your tongue about Mary, Mr. Tom? (*takes his arm, and is going forwards,* L. D. *Enter* ADMIRAL, *with* MRS. PONTIFEX *leaning on his arm. The others separate hastily and in confusion.*)

ADM. I thought I informed you, sir, that I was about to be married to that lady?

LIEUT. K. You did, sir.

ADM. And under those circumstances do you think it proper or decent that I should find that lady flaunting about with her arm through yours? Look at me, sir, and answer me!

LIEUT K (R.). I *am* looking at you, sir.

ADM. (L.). Well, sir!

LIEUT. K. And I want to know whether you think it proper or decent that I should find that lady flaunting about with her arm through yours?

ADM. Pooh! pooh! nonsense—you foolish monkey! you're not going to be jealous of your father?

MRS. P. (L. C., *to* ADMIRAL). Now—my dear sir——

LIEUT. K. Why not, when you are jealous of your son?

MISS M. (R. C., *to* LIEUT. K.). Now be calm.

ADM. The fact is, sir, that I am particularly pleased with this lady.

LIEUT. K. Sir, you do me great honor.

ADM. *She* has done you great honor in condescending to care about such a—such—a——

MISS M. Very agreeable young man as Lieutenant Kingston, R. N.

ADM. Oh, what! he has been doing the agreeable to you, has he?

MISS M. The fact is, sir, that I am particularly pleased with this gentleman.

MRS. P. Kingston dear! what *have* you been saying to Miss Mortimer?

LIEUT. K. I have only been endeavoring to make myself acceptable to my future—ahem!—mother-in-law.

ADM. (*aside*). Confound the word—how ridiculous it sounds in his mouth!

MRS. P. My dear Miss Mortimer, you remember, no doubt, the terms of our agreement, and the objects for which we undertook to see the dear Admiral and his son?

MISS M. (*aside*). The dear Admiral! (*aloud*) Perfectly—you were to obtain a release for his son from the "dear Admiral," and I was to obtain a release for the Admiral from "Kingston dear!"

MRS. P. (*aside*). Kingston dear!

MISS M. (*aside*). She doesn't seem to like it herself.

MRS. P. Have you succeeded?

MISS M. Ask him.

LIEUT. K. I have promised to obey her wishes in all things.

MRS. P. (*aside*). Indeed!

MISS M. Have you succeeded?

MRS. P. I refer you to the Admiral himself.

ADM. I must own that I strongly incline to comply with any request of this lady's.

MISS M. (*aside*). Really!

MRS. P. Our course, then, is obvious. We have been the unintention cause of the first difference between a worthy father and an excellent son. In the peculiar circumstances under which we are about to become members of that family, it is our first duty to remove that difference. The goodness of both their hearts has been shown in the readiness with which they have listened to our pacific overtures, and I now call upon you, Kingston dear, to extend that hand which your father is eager to receive in his.

LIEUT. K. (*running to his father*). My dear sir!

ADM. (L.). My dear boy.

LIEUT. K. (L. C.). I'm heartily sorry, sir, that we should have disagreed for a moment.

ADM. You can't be more sorry than I am, my boy, nor more glad that the little squall has passed over.

MISS M. I am delighted to see you again as you should be.

MRS. P. And so am I!

ADM. (*shaking hands with* MRS. P.). I'm sure you are—worthy, excellent creature, I'm sure you are!

LIEUT. K. (*shaking hands with* MISS M.). I'm sure you are—charming, delightful creature—I'm sure you are!

ADM. There—that will do, Tom; now come hither, I want to speak to you. You ladies will excuse us for two minutes, I'm sure?

MISS M. Oh! certainly, sir.

MRS. P. Come, love! (MISS MORTIMER *takes her arm, and they retire up st[illegible], looking over prints, etc., at table,* R.)

ADM. [illegible]y, Tom——

LIEUT. K. Yes, sir.

ADM. Tom, I say.

LIEUT. K. Yes, sir.

ADM. (*bawling*). D—n it, sir! I say, Tom!

LIEUT. K. Aye—aye, sir.

ADM. That's the way to answer me—that sounds like old times. Are you in good humor?

LIEUT. K. Never better, sir.

ADM. That's right.

LIEUT. K. Will you allow me to hope that the serenity of *your* mind is perfectly re-established?

ADM. Perfectly. Now look here—(*coaxingly*) What the deuce could ever make you think of marrying a woman fifteen years older than yourself?

LIEUT. K. What the deuce could ever make you think of marrying a girl thirty years younger than yourself?

ADM. I tell you what, Master Tom, you have contracted a vile habit of meeting a question with a question.

LIEUT. K. I don't wish to annoy you, sir.

ADM. I didn't say you annoyed me, sir; I said it was a vile habit, and so it is. Come—come, let me see you return to your senses, and renounce this silly match.

LIEUT. K. Silly match, sir—silly match?

ADM. Now, you said you were in a good humor.

LIEUT. K. So I am, sir—go on—say what you like. I'll take it all in good part.

ADM. Now own that's a silly match—ha, ha!

LIEUT. K. Anything you please, sir—ha, ha!

ADM. Just fancy you and your wife twenty years hence—you still a young man, with straight back and elastic gait, walking—*thus:* (*crossing*, R., *and back*, L.) and she, with stooping shoulders and half-palsied head, toddling by your side—*thus:* (*laughing*) Tom! Tom! it's too idiculous. People should marry those of their own age. I always told you so.

LIEUT. K. (*with a forced laugh*). The picture you have drawn, sir, is funny enough, I must own. Attend one moment, while I sketch another. When a certain young lady shall have reached the age of forty she will still retain her firm step and handsome features, and will walk along, the admired of all beholders—*thus:* (*crosses*, L., *and back*, R.) while a certain Admiral, then turned of seventy, with one hand on his stick and t'other behind his back, will keep up with her as best he may—*thus:* Sir, sir! it's too ridiculous! People should marry those of their own age. I always told you so.

ADM. (L.). Or, if *there is* a difference, the man should be the older.

LIEUT. K. (R.). Well, sir, it's of no use to talk; the thing is settled, and you have consented.

ADM. (L). So have you, if you come to that.

LIEUT. K. (R.). I don't consider that I have done any such thing.

ADM. Nor I neither,

LIEUT. K. Do you mean to deny your words, sir?

ADM. Can I do better than follow your excellent example, sir?

LIEUT. K. Very well, sir, then there seems no chance of our agreeing.

ADM. Not the slightest. (*they flounce from each other, and turn up the stage.* MRS. P. *and* MISS M. *at same time come down centre.*)

MISS M. (R.). Now here is a pretty business—they have quarrelled again!

MRS. P. Oh, it's quite shocking, my dear!

MISS M. Much good you seem to have done by your interference!

MRS. P. Come! I have done ss much as you have, at all events!

MISS M. You pretended that the Admiral had consented——

MRS. P. "Pretended!" Miss Mortimer; pray be a little more guarded in your expressions

MISS M. *I* suspect you have not said half a dozen words to him on the subject.

MRS. P. A line out of a copy-book, Miss Mortimer.

MISS M. What's that, pray?

MRS. P. "Suspicion ever haunts the guilty mind."

MISS M. Another.

MRS. P. What?

MISS M. "Old age is querulous."

MRS. P. "Saucy girls are very rude."

MISS M. Widow Pontifex, you are insulting.

MRS. P. Spinster Mortimer, ditto. (*they flounce up centre of stage.* ADMIRAL *and* LIEUTENANT *come down at the two sides at same time.*)

ADM. (*aside*). Dear me! dear me! the ladies are quarreling now.

LIEUT. K. (R., *aside*). If the women get to loggerheads, there's an end of everything! (*by this time the ladies have returned*—MRS. PONTIFEX *on the side of* LIEUT. K., *and* MISS MORTIMER *on the side of the* ADMIRAL.)

ADM. (*to* MISS M.). My dear child, I'm sorry to see this.

MISS M. Don't call me child, sir; if I'm to marry a man as old as you are, I won't be called a child, at all events.

ADM. (L.). Very well, miss.

MISS M. (L. C.). Don't call me miss.

ADM. For shame, my dear.

MISS M. Don't call me, my dear.

ADM. (*aside*). Oh, dear! oh, dear! what *have* I undertaken?

LIEUT K. (R., *to* MRS. P.). I'm really quite vexed, Mrs. Pontifex.

MRS. P. (R. C.). Don't Mrs. Pontifex me, sir.

LIEUT. K. Is this the temper which I thought so perfect?

MRS. P. Your obstinacy is enough to spoil any temper in the world.

LIEUT. K. You are many years older than I am, and ought to set a better example.

MRS. P. That's right, sir! insult me because I was born before you; but I needn't wonder at anything you do, after the manner in which you have behaved to your worthy and excellent father there.

ADM. Madam, I am very much obliged to you.

MISS M. For abusing your son! that's good taste, at all events! I'm sure a better young man never existed.

LIEUT. K. That's very kind of you, Mary.

MRS. P. If you had a proper respect for your father, you would give way to him in everything.

LIEUT. K. I have the highest possible respect for my father; but he shall never marry that girl, if I can help it.

MISS M. A truly affectionate father would overlook a trifling defect in so admirable a son.

ADM. I love my son, Miss Mortimer, as a father ought; but d——n me if I consent to his marriage with that lady. And now as we seem at any rate to understand one another about a misunderstanding, nothing remains for me but to order my carriage and go home. Here, waiter!

LIEUT. K. Stay, sir! as I know not when or under what circumstances we may meet again, I crave your permission to take a proper and respectful leave of my future mother-in-law.

ADM. Be it so! Mary, take leave of my son; and you, madam, as there is no difference between us, will perhaps not refuse my parting good wishes. (MRS. PONTIFEX *goes to* ADMIRAL *and* MISS MORTIMER *to* LIEUT. K.)

MISS M. (R. C.). It's very disagreeable to part again, just as we have met after so many years of absence.

LIEUT. K. (R.). It makes me wretched to think of it.

ADM. (L.). Believe me, Mrs. Pontifex, I part with the greatest reluctance from a lady for whom a very short acquaintance has given me the most sincere esteem and regard.

MRS. P. (L. C.). I assure you, my dear sir, the regret is mutual.

ADM. Farewell, then, madam. (*taking her hand.*)

MRS. P. Farewell, sir.

LIEUT. K. (*taking* MISS MORTIMER'S *hand*). Farewell, old playfellow.

MISS M. Farewell!

ADM. I presume you are to be my daughter-in-law, and I therefore offer you a father's blessing. (*kissing her forehead.*)

LIEUT. K. Mother-in-law, accept my dutiful regrets at leaving you. (*kisses her forehead.*)

ADM. Once more, adieu! (*takes* MRS. PONTIFEX *in his arms.*)

LIEUT. K. Mary!

MISS M. Tom! (*he takes her in his arms.*)

ADM. (*looking over* MRS. PONTIFEX'S *shoulder*). Lieutenant Kingston!

LIEUT. K. (*looking over* MISS MORTIMER'S *shoulder*). Sir!

ADM. What the devil are you about, sir?

LIEUT. K. What are you about, sir?

ADM. Sir, I hardly know!

LIEUT. K. A thought strikes me——

ADM. What is it?

LIEUT. K. Do you find yourself comfortable?

ADM. Very.

LIEUT. K. So I do; then suppose we change wives, and remain as we are.

ADM. It's all in the family, ma'am; what say you?

MRS. P. My dear sir, I told you that the first wish of my heart was to please your son; my next to please you. *I* see that his happiness is concerned, and I consent at once.

LIEUT. K. My dear Mrs. Pontifex, what *shall I* say to you?

MRS. P. Say, "thank you, mamma," and be a good boy for the future.

LIEUT. K. My Mary won't object.

MISS M. Well, I don't know that I shall.

ADM. Why, Miss Mary! what has become of your resolution to marry an admiral? Have you forgotten Duncan, Nelson, Howe and Jarvis?

MISS M. (*giving her hand to* LIEUT. K.). They were *all* lieutenants *once*, sir.

ADM. Come, then, let us all shake hands upon this new bargain.

MISS M. (*giving her hand to* MRS. P.). Forgive my cross question.

MRS. P. Forgive my crooked answer.

ADM. Tom, my boy, I'll make this lady as good a husband as I can.

MRS. P. And this lady will be happy to be the means of restoring harmony between a good father and son whom she will never cease to regard.

ADM. Mary!

MISS M. Aye, aye, sir.

ADM. I have resigned the command of you to my first leutenant there.

MISS M. Sir, I shall do my best to obey his orders.

ADM. After all, there's nothing like sticking to the rules of the service; you are scarcely more than a twenty gun vessel and have no right to be commanded by an admiral; and now ring the bell. (LIEUT. K. *rings.*)

LIEUT. K. I, say sir, don't you agree with me that people should marry those of a suitable age?

ADM. *I* always said so!

LIEUT. K. You did, and so did I!

ADM. That you did, I must admit.

LIEUT. K. *embraces* MISS MORTIMER.—ADMIRAL *embraces* MRS. PONTIFEX. SHORT *and* DENNIS *enters* L. *at same moment, and stare with astonishment.*

DEN. (*to* SHORT). As they say in a sharp frost, it's fine embracing weather, sir!

ADM. Landlord!

SHORT. (*advancing* L.). Dinner is quite ready, sir.

ADM. Why, I didn't order it!

SHORT. No, sir—but I somehow felt sure you would want it.

ADM. Well, as it happens, we do—and so, the battle being over, the crew shall go to dinner. Let me, however first hope to obtain an acknowledgment that there is no exception to the golden rule (Britannia's rule), that "Naval Engagements," led by a British Admiral, and backed by British hands, must prove successful.

Disposition of the Characters.

SHORT. DENNIS.

LIEUT. K. MISS M. MRS. P. ADMIRAL.

R. L.

CURTAIN.

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14.	No Thoroughfare, drama, 5 acts and prologue.....	13	6
173.	Off the Stage, comedietta, 1 act....	3	3
176.	On Bread and Water, farce, 1 act...	1	2
90.	Only a Halfpenny, farce, 1 act.....	2	2
170.	Only Somebody, farce, 1 act.....	4	2
33.	One too Many for Him, farce, 1 act.	2	3
3.	£100,000, comedy, 3 acts.....	8	4
97.	Orange Blossoms, comedietta, 1 act.	3	3
66.	Orange Girl, drama, in prologue and 3 acts.....	18	4
172.	Ours, comedy, 3 acts.....	6	3
94.	Our Clerks, farce, 1 act.....	7	5
45.	Our Domestics, comedy farce, 2 acts	6	6
155.	Our Heroes, military play, 5 acts...	24	5
178.	Out at Sea, drama in prologue and 4 acts.....	16	5
147.	Overland Route, comedy, 3 acts....	11	5
156.	Peace at Any Price, farce, 1 act....	1	1
82.	Peep o' Day, drama, 4 acts.....	12	4
127.	Peggy Green, farce, 1 act.....	3	10
23.	Petticoat Parliament, extravaganza, in one act.....	15	24
62.	Photographic Fix, farce, 1 act.....	3	2

No.		M.	F.
61.	Plot and Passion, drama, 3 acts....	7	2
138.	Poll and Partner Joe, burlesque, 1 act.....	10	3
110.	Poppleton's Predicaments, farce, 1	3	6
50.	Porter's Knot, drama, 2 acts.....	8	2
59.	Post Boy, drama, 2 acts.....	5	3
95.	Pretty Horse-Breaker, farce, 1 act..	3	10
181 and 182.	Queen Mary, drama, 4 acts.	38	8
157.	Quite at Home, comedietta, 1 act...	5	2
196.	Queerest Courtship (The), comic operetta, 1 act.....	1	1
132.	Race for a Dinner, farce, 1 act.....	10	
183.	Richelieu, play, 5 acts	16	2
38.	Rightful Heir, drama, 5 acts.....	10	2
77.	Roll of the Drum, drama, 3 acts....	8	4
13.	Ruy Blas, drama, 4 acts.....	12	4
194.	Rum, drama, 3 acts.....	7	4
195.	Rosemi Shell, travesty, 1 act, 4 scenes.....	6	3
158.	School, comedy, 4 acts.....	6	6
79.	Sheep in Wolf's Clothing, drama, 1	7	5
37.	Silent Protector, farce, 1 act.....	3	2
35.	Silent Woman, farce, 1 act.....	2	1
43.	Sisterly Service, comedietta, 1 act..	7	2
6.	Six Months Ago, comedietta, 1 act.	2	1
10.	Snapping Turtles, duologue, 1 act..	1	1
26.	Society, comedy, 3 acts.....	16	5
78.	Special Performances, farce, 1 act..	7	3
31.	Taming a Tiger, farce, 1 act.....	3	
150.	Tell-Tale Heart, comedietta, 1 act..	1	2
120.	Tempest in a Teapot, comedy, 1 act.	2	1
146.	There's no Smoke Without Fire, comedietta, 1 act.....	1	2
83.	Thrice Married, personation piece, 1 act.....	6	1
42.	Time and the Hour, drama, 3 acts..	7	3
27.	Time and Tide, drama, 3 acts and prologue.....	7	5
133.	Timothy to the Rescue, farce, 1 act.	4	2
153.	'Tis Better to Live than to Die, farce, 1 act.....	2	1
134.	Tompkins the Troubadour, farce, 1	3	2
29.	Turning the Tables, farce, 1 act....	5	3
168.	Tweedie's Rights, comedy, 2 acts..	4	2
126.	Twice Killed, farce, 1 act.....	6	3
56.	Two Gay Deceivers, farce, 1 act....	3	
123.	Two Polts, farce, 1 act.....	4	4
198.	Twin Sisters (The), comic operetta, 1 act.....	3	1
162.	Uncle's Will, comedietta, 1 act.....	2	1
106.	Up for the Cattle Show, farce, 1 act.	6	2
81.	Vandyke Brown, farce, 1 act.....	3	3
124.	Volunteer Review, farce, 1 act.....	6	6
91.	Walpole, comedy, 3 acts.	7	2
118.	Wanted, a Young Lady, farce, 1 act.	3	
44.	War to the Knife, comedy, 3 acts...	5	4
105.	Which of the Two? comedietta, 1 act	2	10
98.	Who is Who? farce, 1 act.....	3	2
12.	Widow Hunt, comedy, 3 acts.....	4	4
5.	William Tell with a Vengeance, burlesque.....	8	2
136.	Woman in Red, drama, 3 acts and prologue.....	6	
161.	Woman's Vows and Mason's Oaths, 4 acts.....	10	4
11.	Woodcock's Little Game, farce, 2	4	4
54.	Young Collegian (Cantab.), farce, 1	3	3

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